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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 LIMA 002451

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DEPT FOR CA/FPP, CA/EX, WHA/AND
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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: NEW PERUVIAN NATIONAL AIRPORT POLICE DIVISION

Ref: Lima 1543

Summary:

1. (SBU) Post's Fraud Prevention Unit (FPU) continues to actively engage with Peruvian officials to rout out corruption among the ranks of more than seven different police units operating at Lima's Jorge Chavez International Airport (JCIA). These discussions led to the idea of one, overall division with responsibility for all security-related functions at the airport. After months of coordination and negotiations, on April 22, 2005 the Interior Minister issued Ministerial Resolution # 0960-2005-IN/PNP creating the special Airport Police Division to centralize law enforcement at all international airports in Peru. The first airport where the new Division will operate is Lima's Jorge Chavez. Although the resolution has been signed and President Toledo supports the creation and installation of this Division, the selection of officers and location in which to house them as well as identification of funding, is ongoing. End summary.

Background

2. (SBU) For decades, Lima's International Airport Jorge Chavez had been administrated by a public institution, CORPAC. Numerous interceptions of mala fide travelers at the airport and follow-on investigations demonstrated that the airport was ripe for corruption. Alien smuggling and visa rings used the airport as a transit point for illegal immigration to the U.S. and Europe. With cooperation from corrupt police and immigration officials, criminal organizations had easy access to restricted areas at the airport. Mafias and official corruption had historically co-existed with smugglers of Chinese and Cuban travelers along with the smuggling of children and women via the Lima airport.

3. (SBU) On February 14, 2001, Lima International Airport Jorge Chavez was privatized. The new Lima Airport Partners [(LAP)- a consortium made up of Frankfurt Airport Co., Bechtel and Cosapi] invested USD180 million in a concession that they will hold for the next 30 years. LAP has worked tirelessly to modernize the airport and improve security controls and customer service. However, the airport still lacked a reputable law enforcement presence.

4. (U) Consular officers routinely conduct airport spot checks, checking with counter personnel and airline pre-screeners. FPU has trained most of the airline personnel extensively, with emphasis on recognition of fake documents, washed visas, and identity theft. Our periodic presence at the airport serves to reinforce that training and allows airline officials to ask questions and share trend information. In October 2003, at FPU's suggestion, the Peruvian Attorney General issued a resolution assigning two prosecutors to the airport to combat document fraud as well as alien smuggling. The presence of these prosecutors has assisted in arresting and prosecuting malafide travelers attempting to board with fake visas, using false identities, and through other fraud-related efforts.

New Airport Police Division

5. (SBU) Since November 2004, FPU has been working closely with the Peruvian National Police (PNP) to create a new Airport Police Division that would operate under one command. This division would gradually replace the seven different airport police units currently operating at Jorge Chavez. FPU along with RSO, DHS, DEA and other Embassy agencies have attended several meetings with staff from the Peruvian Ministry of Interior and Peruvian Police Headquarters to push for its creation. The project was driven by two Peruvian National Police (PNP) officers, with Post's senior FPI assisting by providing technical legal assistance. The new Airport Police Division will be a more specialized and reliable police force, made up of vetted officers. It will operate under one command at the airport, headed by PNP Col. Oswaldo HURTADO Caceres. The Minister of Interior, Dr. Felix Murazzo, and PNP Director, General Marco

Miyashiro, approved the project and Peruvian President Alejandro has come out in the press in support of the new Division. The Embassy has supported the appointment of Col. Hurtado. He is well and favorably known to us, having worked with a variety of Embassy offices and agencies for the last 15 years.

16. (SBU) At a May 3, 2005 meeting at the Embassy, officers from the PNP, the Ministry of Interior and LAP established working groups to implement the project, with DEA spearheading the negotiations for the construction of office space, selection and training of officers, and security groups.

17. (SBU) Comment: Work on the project continues, as the Ministry tries to locate financial support. Post firmly believes that the new Division will be successfully established in the course of the next year. We will continue to report on developments in establishing the Division and we will continue our efforts with airline and airport officials to combat alien smuggling and document fraud. End comment.

Struble